

Department of Human Services

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Articles in Today's Clips Tuesday, April 3, 2007

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<u>TOPIC</u>	<u>PAGE</u>
*Child Abuse/Neglect/Protection	2-10
Day Care	11-13
Health Care	14
Child Support	15
Poverty	16
*State Budget	17-19
DHS Local Offices	20-21
News Release	22

*Important story at this spot



Kids queried in sex-abuse case

Mom accused of offering girl

April 3, 2007

BY JACK KRESNAK

FREE PRESS STAFF WRITER

The five children of a Taylor woman charged during the weekend with trying to sell one of her daughters to an undercover police officer for sex were interviewed Monday by investigators trying to determine whether other child abuse or exploitation had occurred.

Results of those interviews were not disclosed, as the Wayne County Sheriff's Office tries to determine whether any other adults may have been involved in the alleged scheme to profit from child sexual abuse, officials said.

The 33-year-old woman, whose name is being withheld by the Free Press to protect her children, is being held in lieu of a \$1-million bond pending an April 19 preliminary examination in 34th District Court in Romulus on several sex-abuse charges.

She was arrested Friday when she allegedly brought her 7-year-old daughter to a Romulus hotel after arranging to allow someone she met on the Internet to sexually abuse the girl for pay.

The man police say the woman was trying to sell her daughter to turned out to be an undercover sheriff's deputy posing as a photographer interested in taking pornographic pictures of children. During several online chats with the deputy, police said, the woman said her daughter had been used in sex acts for money before. Sheriff's deputies confiscated the woman's computer and were assisted by Child Protective Services investigators, who placed the children -- four girls and a boy ages 6-12 -- in foster care.

On Saturday, the Wayne County Department of Human Services filed a petition in Wayne County Family Court seeking to terminate the rights of the mother and the children's father, whose involvement in any abuse was being investigated, officials said.

The petition said the woman was wanted for a probation violation after being convicted of credit card fraud in Oakland County in 2004. Both parents face a pretrial hearing Monday in juvenile court on the termination of rights petition.

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Lethbridges and youngest children won't reunite

March 30, 2007

By JACK KRESNAK

FREE PRESS STAFF WRITER

A Washtenaw County judge decided today that Matt and Jennifer Lethbridge, whose nine children all have landed in foster care, will not be reunited with their two youngest children.

Family Court Judge Darlene O'Brien ordered the couple's parental rights to their 11-month-old daughter terminated, but she did not end their rights to their 4-year-old daughter, saying it would not be in the child's best interest. Instead, the judge ordered the child's current foster parents in Washtenaw County to consider becoming her permanent guardians.

O'Brien said the girl "would have the benefit of continuing to have her parents in her life, but she wouldn't leave the foster parents' home. She would be raised by them."

The Washtenaw County foster parents have expressed an interest in adopting the girl's 11-month-old sister.

The 4-year-old was in foster care in Detroit with her 2-year-old brother Isaac when he was killed in his foster mother's home last August.

On hearing the ruling, Matt Lethbridge, 33, initially broke down and then appeared confused about the implications. He said he and his wife would try to keep a relationship with the 4-year-old through her foster parents.

Six of the Lethbridges' older children were removed from their care after complaints involving neglect. All were later adopted. Isaac and the 4-year-old landed in foster care in 2005, and an infant daughter born last April was placed in foster care almost immediately. The couple's 10th child is due next month. Washtenaw County authorities plan to file a petition to remove that child after its birth.

The Lethbridges, who now live in Canton, had contended that they have matured as parents and recognize why their children were removed from their care. Among the past problems: Their homes were filthy and there were signs of emotional and medical neglect of the children.

Washtenaw County Assistant Prosecutor Stacie Shaw told the court that the couple's living conditions get worse when authorities are no longer involved with the family. "Their history and their actions speak louder than their words," Shaw said, adding, "I don't doubt in my heart that the parents truly love both of these girls," but the risk is too great to entrust the children to their care.

The children's attorney, S. Joy Gaines, also asked O'Brien to terminate the Lethbridges' parental rights.

"I'm clear that they love their children and that they want to be parents," Gaines said, but "with the extensive protective services history, there are more issues than just cleanliness. There are real mental health issues." She also said it would not be good to move the 4-year-old, who is in her fourth foster home, again.

Earlier today, O'Brien heard testimony from Washtenaw County Protective Services worker Joseph Lanczki who said, despite the family's long history of involvement with protective services and the juvenile court dating to 1997, things had not improved by September 2005, when Isaac and his 4-year-old sister were removed from the Lethbridges' filthy Westland home.

"When conditions of the home reach a level of criminality, it's pretty severe," Lanczki said. The couple were charged with misdemeanor child neglect after the children were removed. Jennifer Lethbridge, now 30, served 45 days in jail; Matt Lethbridge, now 33, received probation.

Matt Lethbridge, given one last chance to convince the judge to return his daughters to their care today, said, "We are fanatic cleaners at this point."

We don't even think the old way any more. We are not those people any more."

Jennifer Lethbridge attended today's hearing by phone. Matt Lethbridge said he and Jennifer quit smoking last Friday, though he said he cheated twice after having a vasectomy on Tuesday.

Isaac's foster mother has been charged with involuntary manslaughter and second-degree child abuse in connection with his death, but no one has been charged with the fatal beating. His death was the subject of a three-day series in the Free Press in January that detailed the failings of the Lula Belle Stewart Center, the Detroit foster care agency that handled Isaac's care, and the state Department of Human Services, which supervised the agency.

Contact **JACK KRESNAK** at 313-223-4544 or jkresnak@freepress.com.

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Tara Grant's sister given authority over estate

April 2, 2007

ASSOCIATED PRESS

The sister of a slain suburban Detroit woman has been granted authority over her estate and the financial interests of her children.

Macomb County Probate Judge Pamela Gilbert O'Sullivan on Monday appointed Alicia Standerfer of Chillicothe, Ohio, as personal representative of Tara Lynn Grant's estate as well as conservator for her 6-year-old daughter and 4-year-old son.

No formal objections were filed, though an adjournment in the case was sought by the family of Grant's husband Stephen Grant, who was charged with strangling the 34-year-old businesswoman Feb. 9 and dismembering her body. Grant's family wanted more time to work through the issues, said Donald Housey, probate court administrator.

"In reality, it's a matter of standing. The children's interests are primary. They're the heirs at law of Tara Grant," Housey said.

Stephen Grant had reported his wife missing but fled March 2 as police searched the couple's Macomb County house, where they found her torso in the garage.

Stephen Grant, 37, was captured two days later, hiding under a fallen tree in a state park 230 miles north of his home. He was hospitalized for hypothermia and later taken to the Macomb County Jail, where he remains jailed without bond.

He faces a May 15 preliminary hearing on charges of murder and mutilation of a corpse.

At a custody hearing in March, a juvenile court referee suspended Stephen Grant's parental rights and placed the children under the supervision of the Michigan Department of Human Services. The department placed the children under Standerfer's care, and she was later granted temporary custody.

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Nanny Charged With Death Of 9-Week-Old Baby

POSTED: 12:41 pm EDT April 2, 2007

A local woman has been charged in the death of a 9-week-old baby she was caring for last year.

Police responded to a 911 call last July of an unresponsive baby, the Rochester Post reported.

Emergency crews transported Ajay Bose to Royal Oak Beaumont Hospital where officials said shaken baby syndrome was evident, according to the paper's reports.

The baby remained in the hospital until passing away on July 31. The Oakland County Medical Examiner determined the cause of death to be cranial cerebral trauma.

The nanny, Kelly Marie Waller, 30, of Madison Heights, was caring for the baby at the time of the incident and has been charged with homicide, manslaughter and first-degree child abuse.

A judge set bond for Waller at \$100,000. Waller was released on a tether and ordered not to have any contact with children under 18 years old.

A preliminary examination is set for May 10.

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Anti-bully bills spark fight over protecting gays

By David Eggert - Associated Press writer

LANSING — De'Lea Cheatham braces for abuse every day.

The 17-year-old senior at Monroe High School says she frequently has been yelled at and shoved by other students because she's a lesbian. She doesn't want to get up some mornings because of the intimidation that looms ahead.

It began in middle school and has only gotten worse in high school, says Cheatham.

"How can people do this?" she asked last week during a day of lobbying lawmakers for bills that would require Michigan school districts to adopt anti-bullying and harassment policies. "Let me be who I want to be."

It turns out Cheatham's plea, along with a push for schools to take bullying more seriously, isn't so simple.

While the Democratic-led state House passed anti-bullying legislation the day Cheatham and 200 supporters visited the Capitol, it was opposed by Republicans and may die in the Senate, which is controlled by the GOP.

Opposition largely exists because the measure would prohibit bullying based on a victim's sexual orientation — along with a number of other characteristics such as height, weight, religion and race.

Michigan law shouldn't formally recognize homosexual behavior, conservatives say, nor should gays get special protection. Republicans favor a broad ban against all bullying in schools.

Gay rights groups and others respond that the bills don't single out any group and say listing why students may be harassed would keep schools from ignoring certain types of intimidation.

"We need to protect everybody, all our students," said Rep. Pam Byrnes, a Democrat from Washtenaw County's Lyndon Township and sponsor of the House legislation.

It would require school boards and charter schools to adopt anti-bullying policies and include provisions to educate students, involve parents and report, investigate and stop bullying.

Nearly 30 percent of teens in the United States are involved in bullying situations, according to the National Youth Violence Prevention Resource Center. The state says most Michigan schools report between one and seven bullying incidents per 100 students per year.

Bullying can have psychological and social ramifications for years afterward for both bullies and their victims. But parents and students say schools too often ignore the problem, shrugging it off as kids being kids.

A law would send a strong message that bullying must be taken seriously, says Kevin Epling of East Lansing, whose 14-year-old son, Matt, killed himself in 2002 after being smeared with raw eggs and syrup during a hazing incident.

Democrats and Republicans alike accuse the other side of putting politics before bullied kids, which frustrates Epling.

"This isn't a political issue. This is a very simple issue of right and wrong," Epling said. "Our kids should not have to be going to school and fearing for their own safety."

If the measure is enacted, it would be the first time state law separates gays and lesbians into a protected class, according to the Midland-based American Family Association of Michigan.

"Public school officials have a legal duty not to put children at risk by in any way legitimizing or encouraging homosexual behavior," said Gary Glenn, the group's president.

Republicans were blocked when trying to delete categories such as sexual orientation from the bill, and add general language guarding all students from bullying.

"It should not matter why or for what reason someone is being bullied. It should be dealt with and punished equally," said Rep. Fulton Sheen, a Republican from Plainwell. "Do we really want to label or identify a child by statute, thus attaching a stigma, which could be worse than the bullying itself?"

Democrats characterize that stance as "ridiculous" and "outrageous," and say Republicans react only to their conservative base.

"It's shameful it would be done at the expense of kids," said Sen. Glenn Anderson, a Westland Democrat and sponsor of an anti-bullying bill. He hopes the House vote will pressure the Senate to act. Anti-bullying measures have been proposed since 2001, and Democratic Gov. Jennifer says the bills are a no-brainer.

One student who supports the legislation is Ben Mathews, an 18-year-old senior at Monroe High and member of the school's Gay-Straight Alliance. Mathews says many students are bullied even if they're straight but perceived to be gay or lesbian.

"To think that a bill that would stop bullying and protect students would be held up just seems kind of ridiculous," Mathews said.

David Eggert can be reached at [deggert\(at\)ap.org](mailto:deggert(at)ap.org)

The anti-bullying bills are House Bills 4091 and 4162, and Senate Bill 307.

On the Net:

Michigan Legislature: <http://www.legislature.mi.gov>

American Family Association of Michigan: <http://www.afamichigan.org>

Triangle Foundation: <http://www.tri.org>

Ludington Daily News

Posted: 4-2-2007

'Do 1 thing'

One act can help prevent child abuse and neglect

PATTI KLEVORN - NEWS EDITOR

April is Child Abuse Prevention Month, and area children's advocates are trying to spread the "Do 1 thing" message: By doing even one thing, a person can make a difference in a child's life.



The André Bosse Centers, Mason County Council for the Prevention of Child Abuse and West Michigan Community Mental Health urge parents, caregivers, teachers and all area residents and visitors to do what they can to protect children in families, neighborhoods and schools.

Blue bows are being placed around trees today to raise awareness and promote prevention.

Community members

1. mentor a child or a parent through a volunteer program.
2. plan parenting or child abuse education programs at your workplace, church or other organization.
3. praise a child when they try hard at something or use good manners.
4. babysit for a stressed-out neighbor or friend.
5. donate your time or money to local child abuse prevention organizations.

Parents

1. plan a family fun night with your children
2. take notice of adults or older children who take an unusual interest in your child.
3. ask your children about their day, and be sure to listen to what they have to say.
4. attend events at your child's school and get involved in their education.
5. when you get stressed, take a break. Don't take it out on your children.

The most important one action to take for a child who is being mistreated is to report suspected abuse.

If a child is in danger, call 911.

To report suspected abuse, call Child Protective Services:

Mason County 843-0126

Lake County 745-4636

Oceana County 873-2106

Manistee County 723-8375 weekdays, ask for the CPS screener; 723-8380, after hours.
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Carrollton schools to outsource day care

Tuesday, April 03, 2007

AMY PAYNE

THE SAGINAW NEWS

Despite protests from employees and residents and no cost-saving figures, the Carrollton Board of Education is pressing forward with a plan to outsource day care services.

The shift could harm children who have bonded with the day care staff, said Karen Rahn, coordinator for Carrollton's child care facilities for 19 years.

"They love and know and trust the people here right now," Rahn told Board members Monday. "What's it going to do to them developmentally and emotionally?"

Board Vice President Mark Myczkowiak said talks are continuing with Marine City-based Professional Contract Management Inc. for day care hiring.

"We have wrestled with this for several years," he said. "We really have no alternative now."

State funding cuts have left Carrollton, like many districts across Michigan, scrambling to trim expenses. Even so, administrators said they don't know how much they might save through the outsourcing.

Superintendent Craig C. Douglas said he hopes to break even on child care, which now costs the district, but he couldn't provide a guess on estimated savings.

"I don't think we're going to know until we actually bid it out," Douglas said.

At its meeting March 19, board members approved using the contract company to hire coaches starting with the spring season. "We need to break even," said Carrollton Elementary School Principal Marc Jaremba.

For two hours Monday, more than 40 employees, residents and family members paced in front of Carrollton's middle and elementary schools, 3211 Carla, holding bright yellow signs bearing the slogan: KEEP OUTSOURCING OUT OF CARROLLTON SCHOOLS.

Most of the protesters wore matching yellow shirts.

Cars drove by, the drivers honking in support. The crowd cheered in reply.

The yellow-clad demonstrators packed into the middle school library, several of whom spoke before the board.

"There's not too many places I'd leave my grandchild other than family," said Sherry Glasslee, 49.

Glasslee, who has worked for the district for 13 years as a paraprofessional, said the district functions like a family unit.

"I've always come to think of us as a family," she said. "I've had kids come up to me and tell me they love me. I'm No. 2 mom."

Administrators will make every effort to retain the staff, Douglas said.

"If anyone loses a position, there will be room in the paraprofessional ranks for a reassignment," he said, urging the crowd to pressure the Legislature to increase funding.

Rahn said that if she kept her position at the day care and worked for the contract company, she would take a substantial pay cut and lose her benefits.

"Why would I go down to \$7 an hour?" she said.

Carrollton is unusual among school districts for maintaining a day care center, Myczkowiak said.

"We can't afford to lose money on a day care program," he said.

But the district may come to regret the staff restructuring, said 38-year-old Michele Jacovitch, a Carrollton resident.

"They're going to lose more money if parents start withdrawing their kids because of outsourcing," she said.
v

Amy Payne is a staff writer. You may reach her at 776-9724.

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[Return to regular web page](#)

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April 3, 2007

Parenting 101**Tips on unregulated daycare centers**

The child-care facilities at many health clubs, supermarkets and malls make life easier for you, and they're fun for your kids. But unlike regular daycare centers, most aren't state-regulated, so there's no official way to look into their safety. It's up to you to check for:

* **An identification policy:** ID should be required when parents drop off and pick up their kids. Most centers will require your child to wear a wristband with his name and your name on it. Always leave a contact number at the desk in case he needs help.

* **Red flags:** Check that the place is clean and childproof. And are the caregivers attentive? * **A plan for potty break:** Many centers don't allow caregivers to change diapers or assist kids in the bathroom. If yours doesn't, make sure your child uses the bathroom (or has a clean diaper) before you leave him.

Jeannette Moninger / Parenting Magazine

[Return to regular web page](#)

Michigan Report

April 2, 2007

STATE STILL WORKING ON HEALTH CARE WAIVER

State officials had hoped to have a federal waiver in place to begin operations of the Michigan First health care plan by April 1, but said they were still confident the plan to provide health insurance to uninsured individuals would be in place this spring.

Negotiations with the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services are ongoing and at a critical stage over the issue of funding the program, said Department of Community Health spokesperson T.J. Bucholz. Funding is the primary obstacle at this point, he said.

Governor Jennifer Granholm announced the proposal in her 2006 State of the State address, but Mr. Bucholz said programs of this sort take a long time to win approval from the federal government. The health care insurance plan that Massachusetts officials announced last year took 30 months to win federal approval, and Mr. Bucholz said the state is working to beat that time frame.

State and federal officials are in discussions two and three times a week on the proposal which Ms. Granholm hoped could provide coverage for as many as 550,000 Michigan adults who do not now have health care coverage, Mr. Bucholz said.

Ms. Granholm has also met with Health and Human Services Secretary Mike Leavitt several times to discuss the proposal.

Michigan Republican Chair Saul Anuzis issued a press release earlier in the day saying the proposal was an example of “the governor’s rhetoric fail(ing) to meet reality.” He charged that Ms. Granholm hyped the proposal to win re-election.

But Mr. Bucholz said: “Those who would put out a press release haven’t the faintest idea how the federal waiver process works.” The state wants resolution as fast as possible, he said, but “in this case patience is a virtue.”

THE DAILY Reporter

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Assistant AG Brenner tells judge to put Dolen on probation until support is paid

[Print Page](#)

By Don Reid-Staff Writer

COLDWATER — Assistant Attorney General Sarah Brenner told Branch County Circuit Court Judge Michael Cherry he needed to place Brain Dolen on probation until he pays his child support arrearage.

Judge Cherry delayed the case for a year in hopes that Dolen, 50, could end a six-year battle to collect a worker's compensation claim and pay the remaining \$11,206.

Brenner pointed out the case could not be continued any longer and Dolen needed to be adjudicated as a felon for failure to pay the child support.

Brenner was in Coldwater from Lansing under Attorney General Mike Cox's program to collect unpaid support.

Defense attorney Eric Goodwin noted the child was now 29 years old.

"I don't know if (Cox) is trying to balance his budget or not," Goodwin said.

The state already takes \$230 a month from Dolen's Social Security.

"That leaves him only \$394 a month to live on," Goodwin added.

Dolen already reduced child support arrearage from the \$19,526 original amount. He now lives in Pioneer, Ohio. The Friend of the Court had asked Ohio to place a lien on any money Dolen will receive in his claim but Judge Cherry said the two states had not be able to work to put that into place yet.

Dolen will only be required to report to probation by mail for the two-year term. He had pleaded no contest to attempted failure to pay child support.

The cases filed in Branch County by the Attorney General's Office to collect back child support has been limited to only those where there are funds readily available.

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[Return to regular web page](#)

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April 3, 2007

Faith and Policy**Infantilizing the poor chains them to poverty****Rabbi Aaron Bergman**

I do not know who will win the next major elections, but I am pretty sure I know who is going to lose. They have lost just about every election of the last several decades. They are the poor.

If the poor were mentioned at all, it was in disparaging terms, essentially putting the full blame of poverty on the poor people themselves -- such as the proposal in Michigan to cut off aid for those on welfare for more than four years. If only they had done a better job of choosing where to be born and in which circumstances, they would not have so many problems and would not be such a drain on resources.

America is potentially losing some of the best and brightest minds of our generation, because of inadequate nutrition and health care, substandard housing and overburdened schools. Given how much ground America has lost to the rest of the world, we cannot afford to allow this to continue. The season of Passover gives us a chance to consider how best to address this problem.

The welfare system in most states clearly does not work in getting people out of the cycle of poverty. There is reasonable debate on which systems would truly work. I am more concerned about our attitude toward the poor. We as a nation, despite the good works of a few, are not concerned about their dignity; we do not believe they can make good decisions about their lives; and we really do not believe they can transform their lives. Our government has not mentioned in years what we should do to help.

The American approach to the poor is to provide a bare subsistence level of life. We give food stamps to control what they buy and make sure they do not buy anything of which we do not approve. We limit choices of where they may send their children to school. How can anyone liberate himself or herself if they are infantilized and marginalized? Where can they develop the dignity and self-respect that will give them the hope and courage to make real changes in their lives?

Judaism has a profoundly different approach that demands that each person, regardless of circumstances, is entitled to dignity.

A perfect example is the holiday of Passover, the festival of freedom and liberation from bondage. It is the obligation of the Jewish community to make sure each member of the community has enough resources to properly celebrate the holiday at the same level as everyone else. They are entitled to the four glasses of wine, and all the delicacies of the festival.

If even for a short time people can visualize a better life for themselves, they may be able to make genuine, positive changes. The community, of course, must continue to be supportive during this transition.

At the festival of Passover itself, the Seder, we say, "Let all who are hungry enter in and eat with us." We do not ask why they are poor or why they are not doing something about it. It is not our task or right to judge, but to love those created in God's image.

At the Seder we say, "This year we are in bondage, but next year let us be free." Judaism understands that as long as some of us are in bondage to poverty, we all are. Let us all be free next year.

Rabbi Aaron Bergman is director of Jewish studies at the Frankel Jewish Academy of Metropolitan Detroit in West Bloomfield. Send letters to The Detroit News, Editorial Page, 615 W. Lafayette, Detroit, MI 48226 or (313) 222-6417 or letters@detnews.com.

[Return to regular web page](#)



04/02/2007

Commissioners oppose senate foster care bill

By: Deborah Klinger

The Van Buren County Board of Commissioners voiced opposition to a new Senate Bill that proposes all foster children now supervised by the Department of Human Services (DHS) be supervised by private agencies.

Van Buren County Juvenile Court Administrator Joseph Leary told commissioners that currently there is no cost to counties when the DHS supervises foster children. The Senate Bill 232 proposal will shift the cost of foster care supervision to the counties, but not provide funding for this to cover the costs. According to Leary, this could cost the county over \$250,000 per year.

"The state says we have to spend more money but then doesn't give us any reasonable way to get more money," said County Administrator Doug Cultra.

The Board adopted a resolution opposing Senate Bill 232, which they will forward to state representatives.

In another area, the board approved the re-appointments of Jim Carol, Catherine Gant, Dave Selent and Carol Sjoquist to the Van Buren Mental Health Authority for a three-year term to expire March 31, 2010.

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MCSSA Against DHS Privatization

MIRS, April 2, 2007

The Michigan County Social Services Association (MCSSA) has come out against a Republican plan to privatize the Department of Human Services (DHS).

The MCSSA is basing its opposition on a study released by the DHS that showed privatization would actually cost the state more than \$70 million. **SB 0232** would privatize foster care services within the DHS.

4AMONDAY,
APRIL 2, 2007Tom Chulski, editorial page editor
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COMMENT

The Monroe Evening News

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Congress shall make no law respecting an establishment of religion, or prohibiting the free exercise thereof; or abridging the freedom of speech, or of the press; or the right of the people peaceably to assemble, and to petition the Government for a redress of grievances.

— The First Amendment to the U.S. Constitution

letters to the editor

Cuts in DHS staff hurt poor, disabled in Monroe County

I would like to take this opportunity to inform the citizens of Michigan that the State of Michigan has greatly reduced the number of employees while continuing to provide services to needy individuals and families.

In the 17 years I have worked for the state at the Monroe County office of the Department of Human Services (DHS), staffing has been cut more than in half. The number of citizens in the state needing help has increased as industries have struggled to stay productive. We have worked 40 hours, while being paid to work 36. Our benefits have been reduced, and wages haven't kept up with the cost of living. I have double the number of cases to maintain and monitor to ensure correct use of funds to help where we are able.

Letters are welcome

Letters on matters of public interest are welcome. Full name, address and telephone number are required. Anonymous letters and those without verifiable names and addresses will not be published. Letters are limited to 400 words and may be edited for brevity. The e-mail address is tom@monroenews.com. Fax: (734) 242-0937.

The Senate and House don't seem to care if we are able to continue to provide service and help to those less fortunate in a timely manner. When utility companies are knocking on doors to turn off service, we don't have the time to stop the disruption of service. This leaves the poor, disabled and senior citizens struggling in live in unacceptable situations.

I hope you keep in mind to let the Senate and House know you do not want the neediest in society to be left behind.

The DHS workers in Monroe care about those they are helping and caring for. We need staffing to continue to help.

**Cynthia Nolan
Monroe**

Editor's note: Maureen Sorbet, a spokeswoman for the DHS in Lansing, said what the writer states is essentially accurate. Ms. Sorbet observes that, while there was a time when staff worked 40 hours a week while being paid for 36, that's not the case now. She said, however, that there has been a significant increase in caseload and decrease in staffing, and that this will continue given the current state budget situation.

Published: Tuesday, April 03, 2007

Council accepts proposal for engineering services

By SARA ROBINSON

The Alpena News

April 3, 2007

The City of Rogers City Council killed four birds with one stone Monday when it unanimously accepted a proposal by C2AE to provide engineering services for four potential city street projects.

Council members Pat Lamb and James Sinclair were absent during the vote.

The proposal, which was a little over \$20,000, was for engineering services for Lincoln Park subdivision and Cedar Street improvements, Calcite Street water main work, and water and sewer line extension on Larke Avenue.

“We can’t proceed with any of these projects until we have engineering and bid specifications,” said City Manager Mark Slown.

Slown told council members they had the option of contracting with C2AE to provide engineering services for all, none, or any combination of the four projects.

If the city decides to proceed with the projects after engineering has been completed, it could be looking at a total expenditure of \$250,000 to \$300,000. The Lincoln Park project is estimated to cost less than \$50,000; the Cedar Street project is estimated at between \$150,000 to \$200,000; the Calcite Street water main work is estimated at \$40,000 to \$50,000; and the Larke Avenue sewer and water line extension is expected to cost between \$15,000 and \$20,000.

“We think we can make it happen with the funding we have,” Slown said.

According to Slown, there is \$195,000 available in a fund specially designated for local streets and in the general fund money set aside for street projects. Another \$55,000 and \$400,000 are available in the local street and major street funds, respectively.

In other business:

Council retroactively granted Slown the authority to sign the grant application for the Michigan State Housing Development Authority facade renovation grant. The application was submitted by the deadline at the end of March. Slown said both the city and the Rogers City Community Development Authority likely would be asked for help in providing some of the local match. Huron Bank and Independent Bank have committed to providing low-interest loans to businesses participating in the program.

Slown said he hopes if the city is awarded the grant that much of the construction can be done in 2007.

Council passed a resolution in opposition to the potential closure of the Michigan Department of Human Services' Presque Isle County office in Rogers City. DHS has said it is considering closing the office and moving employees to other offices.

Council members authorized signing a contract with Jay Greve, who will operate the fish cleaning station at the marina this summer. Greve will be paid \$3,000. The amount had been approved by council at an earlier meeting.

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JENNIFER M. GRANHOLM
GOVERNOR

STATE OF MICHIGAN
DEPARTMENT OF HUMAN SERVICES
LANSING

MARIANNE UDOW
DIRECTOR

News Release

Contact: Maureen Sorbet (517) 373-7394

**Michigan Department of Human Services Summarily Suspends
the Adult Foster Care Large Group Home License of Scenic AFC Home, Inc., License
Number AL320015763 of Judith Stokan, Licensee Designee and Home Administrator**

April 3, 2007

The Michigan Department of Human Services (DHS), Office of Children and Adult Licensing issued an order of summary suspension and notice of intent to revoke the license of Huron County adult foster care large group home licensee Scenic AFC Home, Inc., 7651 Pigeon Road, Pigeon, Michigan. This action resulted from a recent investigation of a complaint of the adult foster care large group home.

The March 22, 2007 complaint investigation found violations of the Adult Foster Care Facility Licensing Act and/or administrative rules regarding resident behavior interventions prohibitions; resident care/licensee responsibilities; resident protection; staffing requirements; use of assistive devices; investigation and reporting of incidents, accidents, illnesses, absences, and death; resident admission criteria; and qualifications of administrator. OCAL took emergency action to protect the health, welfare, and safety of vulnerable adults.

Effective 9:00 a.m., April 3, 2007, the Summary Suspension Order prohibits Judith Stokan from operating an adult foster care large group home at 7651 Pigeon Road, Pigeon, Michigan or at any other address or location. Accordingly, she may not accept physically handicapped, developmentally disabled, mentally ill and aged adults for care after that date and time. The order also requires Ms. Stokan to inform all of the guardians of adults in her care that her license has been suspended and that she can no longer provide adult foster care.

Ms. Stokan has held a license to operate an adult foster care large group home since February 23, 1994. The license was for 17 residents.

Michigan law defines an adult foster care large group home as, "an adult foster care facility with the approved capacity to receive at least 13 but not more than 20 adults to be provided with foster care."

For more information, consult DHS Web site at www.michigan.gov/dhs.